



Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
16th Sunday after Pentecost

**Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Community Worship Service
September 13, 2026**



*We have the closed hearing loop system.
You may be able to turn your hearing device to the "T" setting.*

***To allow all worshippers to reflect and prepare for the service,
please observe silence during the prelude.***

16th Sunday after Pentecost

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE Little Prelude and Fugue in G Minor J. S. Bach

CALL TO WORSHIP *(Please respond with words in bold)*

Come! Let us praise the eternal God!

**Let all that is within us—body, emotions, mind, and will—
praise God's holy name!**

Despite our failures, God forgives and releases us.

In spite our sin, God heals our souls and makes for us a way.

When we are famished and weak,

**God fills us with good and beautiful things,
satisfying our needs and restoring our strength.**

So come! Let us praise the eternal God!

**Sing songs from a grateful heart,
and remember all that He has done for us.**

HYMN #121 **There's a Wideness in God's Mercy**

OPENING PRAYER

**Mighty God, you spoke to your people in the pillars of cloud
and fire as they fled in fear and faith and journeyed together
in the wilderness. Speak to us through your Word today, that
we may hear you calling us through the wilderness places in
our lives and toward new places you have promised for us.
Open our hearts and minds that we may move forward
faithfully in relationship with you and one another. In the
name of Christ, we pray. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Exodus 14:19-31 *Crossing the Red Sea*

The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. ²⁰ It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. ²² The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. ²³ The Egyptians pursued and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. ²⁴ At the morning watch the Lord, in the pillar of fire and cloud, looked down on the Egyptian army and threw the Egyptian army into a panic. ²⁵ He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt."

²⁶ Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." ²⁷ So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. ²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. ²⁹ But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

³⁰ Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

Psalm 114 UMH 835 *Led by God's presence* (Please respond with the words in bold)

Romans 14:1-12 *Do not judge, live only for God*

Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³ Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵ Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also, those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God. ⁷ For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God."

¹² So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

Matthew 18:21-35 *No limits on forgiveness* (Please stand as you are able.)

Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?"

²² Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but I tell you, seventy times seven. ²³ "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything'. ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the

debt. ³¹ When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

L: This is the word of the Lord for the people of Christ.

P: Thanks be to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

(Let us offer our silent confessions.)

Almighty God, we are thankful that your mercy is higher than the heavens, wider than our wanderings, deeper than all our sin. Forgive our frivolous attitude toward life, our callousness toward suffering, our envy of those who we perceive to have more than we have, our obsession with creating a life of constant pleasure, our indifference to the treasures of heaven, our neglect of your wise and gracious teaching, our unwillingness to walk in your way. Help us to change our way of life so that we may desire what is good, love what you love, and do as you command, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Christ didn't just teach us the extent of forgiveness; Christ offers it to us over and over again, a living example of God's infinite grace.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are fully forgiven!

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

Thanks be to God! Amen.

HOMILY

STATEMENT OF FAITH UMH 880 The Nicene Creed

(Please stand as you are able)

GLORIA PATRI #70

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

HYMN #463

Lord, Speak to Me

OFFERTORY

My Tribute

Andrae Crouch
Arr. Judson Trebor

OFFERING <https://www.wnccumc.org/online-donations-to-churches>

DOXOLOGY #95

(Please stand as you are able)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him, all creatures here below. Praise Him above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Merciful Deliverer, you part the waters when we feel trapped and forgive debts too great for us to repay. In the face of fear and brokenness, you lead us with compassion and grace. May the gifts we bring today reflect our deep gratitude for your mercy. Let them support ministries of reconciliation and acts of healing, justice, and welcome. Teach us to lead not with judgment, but with generosity, recognizing that what we have, we hold by your mercy. Bless these offerings and bless us as stewards of your world, always seeking to build a place where grace is abundant. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and THE LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN #89

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE The Heavens Declare the Glory of God Benedetto Marcello
(Please be seated)

PRAYER CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY

Hallie Colantonio, granddaughter of Stephen & Cynthia Wood,
Laura & Woody Livingston, Gary Landrum, Carl Shealey,
Jim Ditzel, Jay Buehler, Carole Guffey,
Sally Steinmeyer, Randall Galloway, Ed Byrd

STAFF & LAY VOLUNTEERS

Pastor: Marcus Dodson: 828-553-0282, marcus61dodson@gmail.com
Organist: Bob Kintner: 828-329-2457
Lay Leaders: Paula Markert: 828-553-9434, Maria Buehler: 828-553-2128
Audio/Visual & Livestream: Joe Haraschak 813-918-1916
Usher: Scott Walter
Liturgist: Beth Holimon
Coffee Hour: Stephanie & Mike Taylor
Liturgical selections are adapted from umcdiscipleship, and re-worship.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The flowers on the altar are given by Mimi & Peter Elder to the glory of God and in honor of their children and grandchildren.

Would you like to become a lay reader? Our current schedule of readers will be ending in mid-October. A new schedule will be made to carry us through the winter until next March/Easter. Please contact Kim Dodson at kidods2061@gmail.com if you would like to be included on this schedule, including dates you are likely NOT available. It is a gift to hear a variety of voices in worship and we appreciate those who share in the leadership of worship in this way.

Memorial Garden Construction Has Begun!

We are excited that the updates for the Memorial Garden have finally moved from the dream stage to actual construction. You will notice that work has begun. In the coming weeks, you may notice some adjustments to our traffic patterns in entering the church or Fellowship Hall. However, these should cause little disruption as we watch the evolution of the new design and the additional opportunities for prayer, reflection, and internment that our updated memorial garden will provide to our church and community. We will share updates periodically on the progression and we will watch it together as we gather each week. We celebrate the gifts of funding, talent and time that are making this possible all offered to the glory of God. If you have concerns during the construction, please direct them to Mike Taylor, Chair of Trustees. He will manage the design team and communicate weekly with them.

Name Tags--If any church attendees need a name tag, please contact Fred Markert at 828-553-3303 or let him know when you see him.

Sunday Morning Bible Study meets at 8:45am on Sundays. All are welcome! This is a 'come as you can' Bible Study and a study guide is provided.

The Prayer Ministry meets every Sunday after church at 11:30 in the Minnich conference room. Anyone is invited to join us on any given week as we lift up the prayer concerns of our community. Prayer requests may be mailed to LTUMCPrayerRequests@gmail.com.

AA Meets Every Thursday Night at 4:45 PM in the Dice Hall. To honor anonymity, please do not go to the Parish building from 4-6 PM.